

Family Influence as it Relates to College Persistence of Latinx College Students: An Examination of Major Satisfaction as a Mediator

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Introduction

LATINX HIGHER EDUCATION

- Latinx college students are increasing their college enrollment compared to other ethnic groups that have remained stable over time (Field, 2018; Musu-Gillette, et. al, 2017).
- Latinx college students face obstacles such as receiving financial aid, class enrollment help, perceived social support from parents without a degree (Garcia, 2010; Allen, 1999; Castellanos, et al., 2005).

FAMILY INFLUENCE

- Family influence is present in Latinx families, and typically it involves immediate and extended family (Piña-Watson, et al., 2013).
- Latinx college students may feel obligated to continue higher education to fulfill their family wishes or increase their social status.

COLLEGE PERSISTENCE

- Previous literature has found that college persistence increases when an individual is part of the academic community (faculty and peers; Castillo, et al., 2006).

MAJOR SATISFACTION

- A relationship between family influence and major satisfaction has not been significant when determining a major (Porter & Umbach, 2006).
- Factors have shown significant relationships in major satisfaction are an individual's personality fit, gender-dominating careers, and racial differences (Dawson-Threat & Huba, 1996).

GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

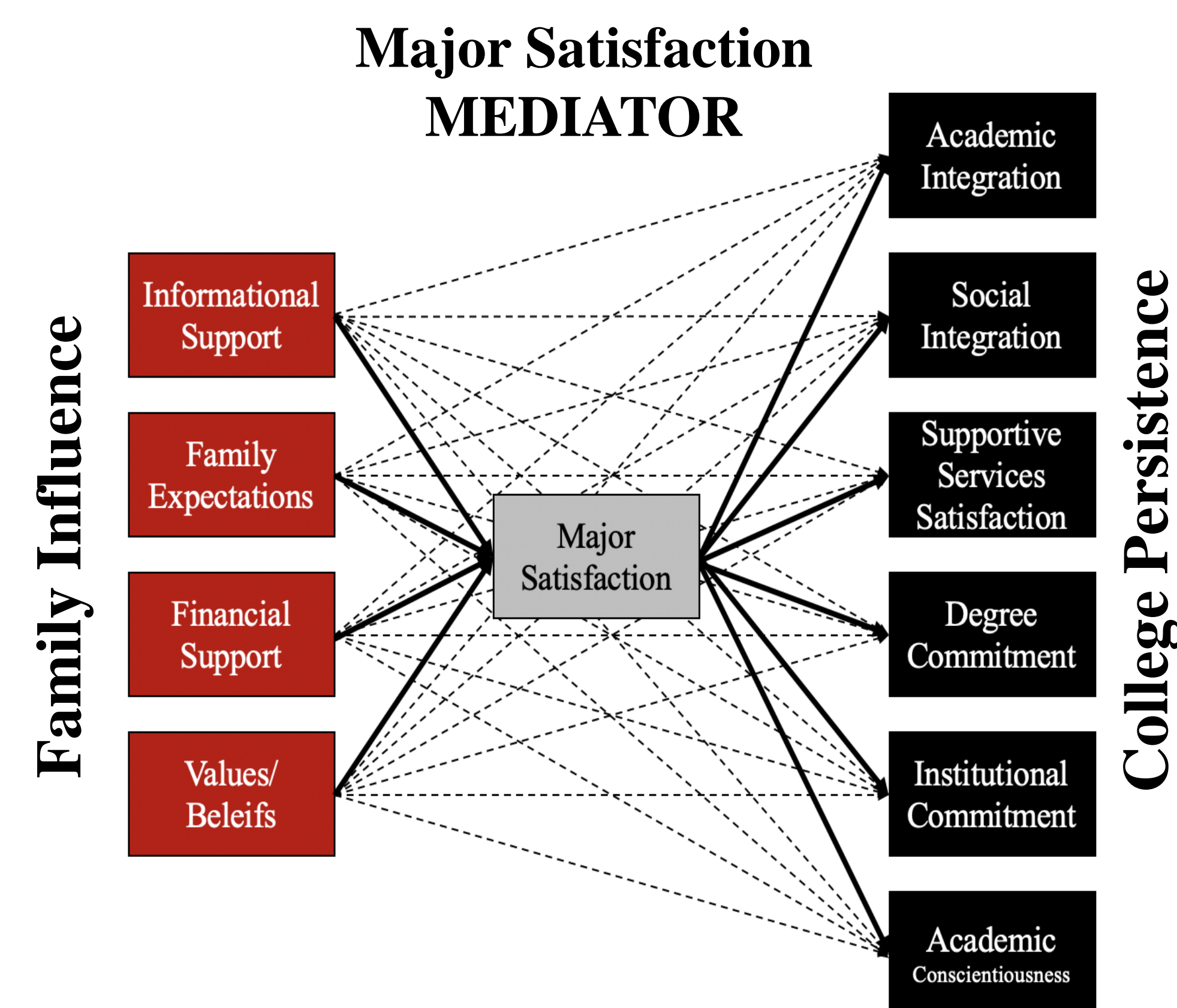
- Family is a form of social support for Latinx college students. Although there is research on higher levels of college persistence based on social support from peers, less has been done in relation to family influences.

Purpose & Hypotheses

PURPOSE

The purpose of the present study is to examine the mediating effect of major satisfaction in the relationship between family expectations and college persistence among Latinx college students.

HYPOTHESIZED MODEL



Methods

PARTICIPANTS

- 198 ($M = 19.24$, $SD = 1.67$; 61.3% women) all of which identified as Latinx and were collected at a university in West Texas.

INSTRUMENTS

- Family Influence Scale** (subscales $\alpha = .90-.95$; Fouad, et al., 2010)
- Academic Major Satisfaction** ($\alpha = .90$; Nauta, 2007)
- College Persistence** (subscales $\alpha = .82-.94$; Davidson, et al., 2009)

PROCEDURE

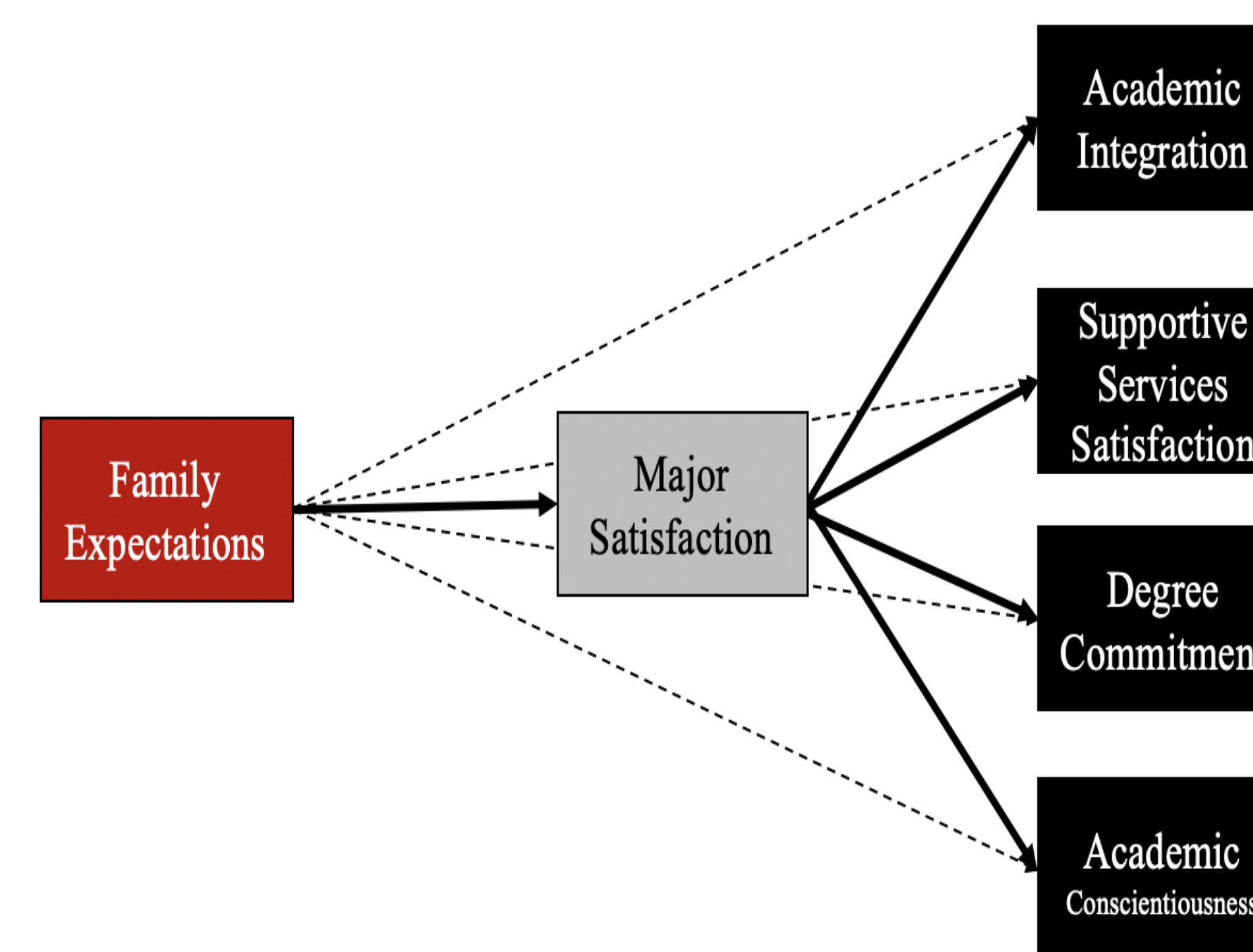
- Online questionnaire through Qualtrics
- Data collected through SONA
- Participants were given course credit for participating

Results

HYPOTHESIZED MODEL

- Model Fit Indices:
 - CFI = .909
 - RMSEA = .084
 - SRMR = .107
- Model was trimmed of all non-significant paths in order to improve model fit.

TRIMMED MODEL



- Model Fit Indices:
 - CFI = .950
 - RMSEA = .11
 - SRMR = .057
- Better model fit achieved when trimming non-significant paths
- All direct and indirect effects shown above were significant. Full reporting can be found below:

		B	SE	95% CI	
				Lower	Upper
Direct Effects					
Family Expectations	→ Major Satisfaction	-.12*	.056	-.226	-.006
Major Satisfaction	→ Academic Integration	.14***	.035	.072	.211
Major Satisfaction	→ Support Services Sat.	.15**	.051	.043	.244
Major Satisfaction	→ Degree Commitment	.21***	.058	.118	.315
Major Satisfaction	→ Academic Conscientiousness	-.33***	.025	-.452	-.222
Indirect Effects					
Family Expectations	→				
Major Satisfaction	→ Academic Integration	-.016*	.008	-.037	-.003
Major Satisfaction	→ Support Services Sat.	-.017*	.010	-.042	-.003
Major Satisfaction	→ Degree Commitment	-.025*	.012	-.042	-.003
Major Satisfaction	→ Academic Conscientiousness	.039*	.019	-.053	-.004

Conclusions

- As family expectations increase, Latinx college students' major satisfaction seems to decrease.
 - Further investigation into potential moderators of this relationship is needed. For example, concordance with familial expectations in academics could be protective whereas a discrepancy between familial expectations in academics with the college students wishes may put them at risk for being less satisfied with their major.
- It is also interesting to note that other family influence variables did not show an association with major satisfaction (e.g., informational support, financial support, and values/beliefs).
- Finally, there were inconsistent findings in the direct and mediating relationships of major satisfaction on college persistence.
 - As expected, higher major satisfaction was related to higher levels of academic integration, support services satisfaction and degree commitment.
 - Contrary to the hypotheses, higher major satisfaction was related to lower academic conscientiousness. Future research should also investigate potential variables that could explain this finding.

References

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